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FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5178  
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
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RUEHBW/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY 0269  
RUEHBM/AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST PRIORITY 0579  
RUEHFL/AMCONSUL FLORENCE PRIORITY 1512  
RUEHMIL/AMCONSUL MILAN PRIORITY 7271  
RUEHNP/AMCONSUL NAPLES PRIORITY 1583  
RUEHPS/USOFFICE PRISTINA PRIORITY 0362  
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/25/2016  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [IT](#) [SR](#) [YI](#) [RO](#)  
SUBJECT: ROME VISITS HIGHLIGHT BALKAN ISSUES

Classified By: Classified by Jonathan R. Cohen, Acting Political Minister Counselor, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary. In separate visits to Rome June 20 by UN Special Envoy for Kosovo and Romanian FM Razvan Ungureanu raised the issues of Italian-Romanian cooperation in Iraq, Romanian entry into the EU and Kosovo. Italian FM D'Alema told Ungureanu that Italy supported Romanian entry into the EU in 2007. D'Alema also thanked Romania for its support of the Iraq mission and stated that Italy would remain committed to Iraqi reconstruction and security training through NATO. On Kosovo, D'Alema reiterated Italian support for Ahtisaari and the Contact Group mechanism. Ungureanu told D'Alema that Serbia's neighbors were concerned that a hasty decision on Kosovo could destabilize Serbia. Ahtisaari told D'Alema that he sensed Chinese and Russian reluctance on pushing for a UN solution on Kosovo that was not acceptable to Belgrade. End Summary.

Italy supports Romanian accession into EU in 2007  
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12. (C) D'Aleman told Ungureanu that Italy supported Romanian entry into the EU on January 1, 2007 and would work to encourage other EU nations to send a clear signal to Bucharest that its bid for early entry would be accepted. D'Alema also thanked the Romanians for their contributions in Iraq and pledged that Italy would remain engaged in Iraq. D'Alema told Ungureanu that Italy would remain engaged in the NATO training mission and civilian reconstruction and development efforts - possibly even through Italian participation (but not leadership) of a PRT. The details of Italian troop withdrawal, however, would be worked out by the military.

13. (C) Ungureanu told D'Alema that Romania was concerned about possible instability in Serbia in advance of a Kosovo status decision. Romania preferred an "unrushed" approach to the status talks and feared that a quick and imposed solution would spell disaster for pro-Western democratic political forces in Belgrade. Ungureanu noted that many of Serbia's neighbors shared this view. D'Alema reiterated Italy's strong support for the Contact Group mechanism and stood behind Ahtisaari, but privately also held concerns about a rapid and imposed solution to Kosovo's status.

Ahtisaari Given Assurances of Italian Support  
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¶4. (C) D'Alema told Ahtisaari that the Prodi government was committed to the Contact Group and fully supported the work of UNOSEK. D'Alema told Ahtisaari that Italy was fully aware that the process was headed toward Kosovar independence but wanted to ensure the Serbian side received fair treatment of its concerns over minority rights and cultural sites. Ahtisaari told D'Alema that he appreciated the Contact Group's policy of having him be the focal point for the CG's work on Kosovo but added that he would occasionally turn to the CG countries to work with Pristina and Belgrade to maintain momentum on the talks.

¶5. (C) Raimondo De Cardona, Director of the Balkan Office of the Italian MFA, told visiting EUR/WE Office Director Allegrone that the Italian MFA noted that Ahtisaari was more sensitive to Serbian concerns and was worried about the stability of the current Serbian government. Additionally, Ahtisaari, who had recently traveled to Moscow and Beijing to discuss the issue of Kosovar independence, noted some reluctance among the Russians and Chinese on granting Kosovar independence without Serbian participation.

¶6. (C) Comment. The GOI is poised to remain a committed and close ally both on the political level and on the ground in the Balkans. Any concerns the Italians have about the pace of negotiations and the possibility of an imposed solution will likely be secondary to their goal of maintaining Contact Group unity.  
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